



Energy and development: The difficult encounter at the development interface

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Energy and Development

The difficult encounter at the
development interface

This lecture

- Special difficulties encountered at the development interface
 - Transferring solutions from one context to another
 - The unequal meeting at the between donor and recipient
- Two cases:
 - Cooperative institutions in Burkina Faso
 - The cooperative movement in DK.

The development interface

- The unequal meeting where resources are transferred
- A number of agents, interests and 'hidden' agendas
- Perspective:
 - A development intervention can be seen as a struggle over resources and meaning fought out between different group of actors rather than a preconceived plan to fulfil certain objectives

This case - Transfer of organisation

“I understand that this is how you organized the electricity supply in your country”

- Reflects our way of thinking
- Partly a myth
- History and context are very different

The Danish example

- The cooperative movement in DK
 - Production
 - dairies, slaughterhouses
 - Trade
 - Cooperative stores
 - Credit
 - Saving unions
 - Electricity

Electricity – a private initiative

- Copenhagen
 - Applications from private enterprises in 1881, 1884 and 1886.
 - Municipal enterprise in 1891
- Køge
 - The first private electricity company started by a watchmaker in 1891. Network, gas engine.
 - The company was bought by the municipality in 1948

Ownership of electricity companies (1905-23)

		Municipalities	Private entrepreneur	Limited company	Co-operative society	Partnership	Total
Town systems	1905	5	15	5	1	1	27
	1910	34	7	8	1	3	53
	1915	46	4	7	13	4	74
	1923	45	2	5	13	6	71
Village systems	1906		4	1	6	4	15
	1910	1	37	11	99	22	170
	1915						
	1923	4	45	17	264	27	357

Context for cooperatives

- La Cour: Agricultural school
 - Demonstration project, Askov, 6 kW
 - Subsidized feasibility studies (72 in 1912)
 - Training of electricians (230 from 1904-18)
- Local champions
 - Farmers, small enterprises, businessmen, school teachers, doctors
- Competition
 - Competition between private, public and cooperative (prices on electricity)

Cooperative institutions in Burkina Faso

- Colonial repression
 - reserve granaries, *Sociétés de prévoyance*,
- State intervention
 - irrigation schemes
- Intervention by external actors
 - village groups

Village group

- External development actors
- Many objectives
 - technology transfer
 - animal traction, fertilizer, pesticides
 - transfer of knowledge
 - literacy training, health
 - organisation for pooling resources to create income
 - mills, vegetable garden, dairies

25 years of village groups

- Many activities and many donors
- Non-profitable activities conducted as long as donors were present
 - gardens, dairies, tree planting, erosion control
- Profitable activities carried out by private entrepreneurs and not by village groups.
 - mills, gardens
- Conclusion:
 - Village groups were in some cases able to transfer knowledge and technology, but did not serve as an institution to generate income

The millet mill - an example of a profitable enterprise

- The first mill started in 1980's. Stopped when it needed major repair.
- Today there are 11 private owned mills and only one mill owned by a village group.
- It is profitable to operate a mill, but although village groups could benefit from pooling resources there are no such examples.

Meaning of village group

- Village group is not seen as an instrument to create income
- Village group is seen as an instrument to get access to resources
- This is a rational reaction to 25 years of development intervention
- – but it has important implications for how people see donor supported electricity cooperatives

The Danish context

- The successful dairies
 - Local initiative
 - Pooling of resources
 - Response to an economic crisis
 - Option to exploit new technology
 - Political struggle between the small/medium and the big farmers, inscribed into more general political struggle

Different perception of cooperatives

Burkina 2005

Meaning: Access to resources

- Marginal production with limited profitability
- Actors – new elite (development brokers)
- Entrepreneurship to attract projects
- Objective: to be dependent on project.

Denmark 1890-1930

Meaning: pooling resources

- Essential production with high profitability
- Actors – small/medium competing big farmers
- Entrepreneurship in terms of profitable activities
- Objectives: to create profit

Two different narratives

Burkina 2005

- Repression
- State control
- External agenda's
- Dependency
- Access to resources

Denmark 1890-1930

- Innovation
- Entrepreneurship
- Community
- Independency
- Industrialisation

General discussion

- Transferring solutions from one context to another
 - technology
 - organisation
- The unequal meeting at the development interface
 - historical legacy (repression, control)
 - external agendas (church, ideology, environment)
 - unequal financial opportunities (dependency)
 - existing patron-client relationship
 - complex power-relationships

Dilemmas in development intervention

- Is it possible to sustain endogenous development by external intervention?
- Is it possible to sustain a bottom up process from the top?
- and is it possible for a electricity cooperative in Burkina Faso to be independent of donors?